

WHEREAS, United States Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard units continually stand ready at North Carolina bases to defend freedom both here and abroad; and

WHEREAS, Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, Marine Corps Air Station New River and Coast Guard Support Station, Elizabeth City, and numerous North Carolina National Guard and Reserve Forces, have long served our State and Nation, in peace and in war; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is the most military-friendly State in the Nation; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pay special tribute to our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines whose bravery and dedication guard the freedom of this Nation and the peace of the world;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MICHAEL F. EASLEY, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim May 15, 2004, as "**ARMED FORCES DAY**" in North Carolina, and urge our citizens to join me in this worthwhile observance.

###